

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed on December 21, 2001, has been received and reviewed. Claims 1-34 are currently pending in the application. Each of claims 1-34 stands rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting.

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

Please note that an Information Disclosure Statement was filed in the above-referenced application on September 11, 2001, but that an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 that accompanied this Information Disclosure Statement has not yet been returned to the undersigned attorney. It is respectfully requested that the information cited on the PTO-1449, which is the same as that of record to that date in the parent of the above-referenced application, be made of record and that an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 evidencing the same be returned to the undersigned attorney.

Preliminary Amendment

Please note that a Preliminary Amendment was filed in the above-referenced application on July 9, 2001, but that entry of the Preliminary Amendment into the Office file for the above-referenced application has not yet been acknowledged. If, for some reason, the Preliminary Amendment has not yet been entered into the Office file, the undersigned attorney will be happy to have a true copy thereof hand-delivered.

Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1-34 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-50 of U.S. Patent 6,228,687 B1. A terminal disclaimer and the appropriate fee are being filed in the above-referenced application, in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321 (b) and (c), to overcome the obviousness-type double patenting rejection, thus expediting prosecution of the above-referenced application and avoiding

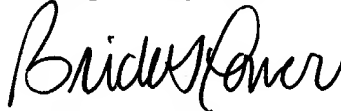
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further expenses and time delay. The filing of a terminal disclaimer in the above-referenced application should not be construed as acquiescence of the obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1-34 is allowable. An early notice of the allowability of each of these claims is respectfully solicited, as is an indication that the above-referenced application has been passed for issuance. If any issues preventing the allowance of any of claims 1-34 remain which might be resolved by way of a telephone conference, the Office is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Enclosure: Terminal Disclaimer

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